

ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE **A-3**

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Klaus Barbie

Former U.S. agents say they spirited Klaus Barbie out of Europe.

Retired intelligence agents said yesterday they had "no great pangs of conscience" about hiding the former Nazi Gestapo officer from French authorities in 1951. Barbie, 69, called the "Butcher of Lyon" because of his war crimes in Lyon from 1942 to 1944, was extradited to France in February from Bolivia, where he had been living since the end of World War II. In an interview with the British Broadcasting Corp., Eugene Kolb, a former major in the U.S. Counter Intelligence Corps, said American officials knew Barbie was wanted for his Gestapo activities, but said they thought he was charged with minor crimes. Other former U.S. agents acknowledged in the BBC

interview that they helped hundreds of Nazis, who were useful to the United States, escape prosecution. The U.S. Justice Department is investigating allegations that American intelligence groups hired Barbie to provide them with information about Communist activities in Europe and then helped him escape to Bolivia.

By Staff Writers, U.S. and Foreign News